



# LUTHER MEMORIAL

lutheran church



## The Quarterly Messenger October 2020



Thank you to everyone who came out to support our  
"Drop Your Drawers" Event!

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Julie Moe, Congregation Council President  
Rev. Julie G Hutson, Lead Pastor  
Rev. Laura Harris-Ferree, Pastor of Outreach  
and Community  
Morgan Lee, Director of Technology &  
Communications



### ***PJ's PAGE is a copy of her September 25th letter to the congregation***

*There is a time for everything, a time for every purpose under heaven:  
A time to be born and a time to die; a time to plant and a time to harvest;  
A time to hurt and a time to heal; a time to tear down and a time to build up;  
A time to cry and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance;  
A time to scatter stones and a time to gather them; a time for holding close and a time for holding back;  
A time to seek and a time to lose; a time to keep and a time to throw away;  
A time to tear and a time to mend; a time to be silent and a time to speak;*

*A time to love and a time to hate; a time for hostilities and a time for peace.*

*What do workers gain from their efforts? I have reflected on this while learning all the kinds of work God gives to humankind. God has made everything in harmony with the divine; yet although the Almighty has imbued eternity in our soul, we are unable to grasp the totality of God's work from beginning to end. Ecclesiastes 3: 1-11*

Dear Ones,

This passage from Ecclesiastes is filled with meaning. Bruce and I had it read at our wedding. It is often read at times of transition and in seasons of change.

My ministry with you has entered into such a season. I have been called by the ELCA to serve as the Director of Contextual and Experiential Education at Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, Ohio. In this capacity I will work with students as they engage with Leadership in Context ministry sites, Clinical Pastoral Education sites, and Internship sites. I will teach Leadership classes and also have the opportunity to preach and lead worship among the seminary community.

The decision to accept this call almost broke my heart. I am so grateful for the ways we have been pastor and people together for the last eleven and a half years. There have been difficult times and there have been joyous times (as the writer of Ecclesiastes notes); our time together has been filled with much love and laughter and mutual care. But when God calls....God calls. (This was a refrain in a fine ordination sermon I heard recently!)

Bishop Shelley Wee and the synod staff will work with your Council in this time of transition. They will see to it that you receive the transitional care you need. They will remind us of boundaries and help you chart a course to find your next pastor. And Pastor Laura Harris Ferree remains as your half time Associate Pastor for Outreach and Community.

I deeply regret that the pandemic will keep me from giving each of you a big hug. You will remain in my heart and in my spirit....with such thanksgiving for the ways you have loved us well, with such thanksgiving for your faithfulness, and with such thanksgiving for the ways you actively share Christ's love in community.

My final Sunday with you will be Reformation Sunday, October 25, 2020. Our worship schedule for October is as follows:

October 4: Worship Recording  
October 11: Worship Recording  
October 18: ZOOM Worship with Eucharist  
October 25: Reformation Sunday with Rite of Confirmation—Worship Recording

Please watch the Mid Week Update each week for any more announcements or details. And feel free to call or email me as always.

Remember that God is with us in every settled place and in every transition.

Soli Deo Gloria,

Pastor Julie Hutson+

## FROM PASTOR LAURA

Greetings Faithful People of God,  
During this time of physical distancing I have been pondering what it means to be the Church in these times. We are not worshipping in person and greeting each other each week. This seemed to be the central focus of our life together, worship. My wonderings led me to remember that Jesus told us the most important commandment is to love God and love our neighbor as ourselves. (Matthew 22: 36-39)



So, while I grieve not worshipping together that is not the most important thing to Jesus (it is still important to our faith lives!). The most important thing to Jesus is that we love God and neighbor. How do we do that in this time of physical distancing and remaining at home?

**Political Action.** As a person of faith my beliefs always guide my political actions. Our country is in a time of unrest as we wrestle with our history of oppression and our current reality of racism. We can love our neighbor by listening to people of color share their truth. We can love our neighbor by educating ourselves on elected officials and policy. We can love our neighbor by urging our elected officials to create systems that bring about justice and equity for all of God's children. Most importantly, we can vote! See you November 3<sup>rd</sup>!

**Using Funds.** At this time, many nonprofits are struggling as government funding is being cut on all levels. You can find nonprofit organizations that are doing work you believe in and donate funds to sustain their vital work. You can donate food to our free little pantry or food banks around the city as they are seeing a decrease in donations. We can love our neighbor through these actions by supporting the need we see in our community.

**Reach Out.** Our mission is to love God and love neighbor which requires us knowing our neighbor. I use this neighbor term broadly as it can mean your neighbor next door or all of our neighbors in the zip code around the church. If we do not know our neighbor, it makes it difficult to love them! A phone call or post card works great in these pandemic times or a physically distanced porch visit with masks, of course! Getting to know our neighbors invites relationship and trust. We will never know the need of our neighbor if the relationship is not established.

So, people of Luther Memorial, as your Pastor of Outreach and Community I encourage you to continue to be the Church at work in the world. Even while our building is closed our mission is not. Be inspired by the word of God to love your neighbor and let me know what that love looks like for you.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Laura

## FROM THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT



Dear Faithful Members of Luther Memorial Lutheran Church, Greetings! I hope you are all well. I felt downright ebullient on September 20th as I prepared to "go to church" for a live Zoom service! Of course it is not the same as being together in our beautiful sanctuary, but we were together. Sharing God's gift of Holy Communion with Pastor Laura presiding was a stirring, joyful time. I hope that more of you will join us for our next Sunday Morning "Live" Worship. Be sure to check your Mid Week Update for dates and Zoom links. As we continue to worship from home and keep our social distance in these COVID-19 days, I'm sure you have noticed changes in our staffing. I am so appreciative of the faith, foresight and flexible thinking Pastor Julie and Pastor Laura have demonstrated as they continually adapt to our current situation. We have eliminated the position of Office Administrator, but we have added a Director of

Technology & Communications. Morgan Lee is off to a fine start! She is working ten hours per week producing our online worship videos as well as managing social media accounts, our website, and other online communications. Morgan works for us remotely from Evanston, Illinois. Welcome, Morgan!

*I had already submitted my letter for this Messenger when I had a phone call from Pastor Julie. She told me of her call to teach at Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, Ohio. I could barely speak through my tears, and my only coherent responses were, "I need time to process this news," followed by, "I hope you know how very much you are loved." I know that this was a difficult decision for Pastor Julie & Bruce, and I know this will be a difficult time for us as we grieve their absence. That said, I am convinced that she is responding faithfully to "God's call to this wider work in the Church," as Pastor Julie put it, and we need to balance our sadness with rejoicing. We will show our deep gratitude for her service among us, and we will support her in her new position with prayer-filled hearts.*

Terry Foley of Buda, Texas, is working as our bookkeeper. She holds regular Zoom meetings with the finance team at LMLC as well as your Council leadership. Terry has 30+ years of business administration experience and we are grateful for her expertise.

Greg Martin is working temporarily as our contracted COVID response employee. Greg works limited hours daily packing & distributing sack lunches, cleaning & sanitizing the building, collecting the mail, monitoring the trash & recycle bins, etc. Many thanks to Greg for taking excellent care of our building in our absence.

Chrade Younkin left us in August, moving back to Indianapolis to be closer to his mother. I cannot adequately express my profound sadness at his leaving; such a beautiful soul and glorious musician! However, we will still enjoy the gift of Chrade's music, thanks to a wealth of pre-recorded video segments.

Church employees and essential volunteers are mostly working from home (with the exception of the COVID response employee). As long as it remains safe to do so, they do have the option of signing up to work in the building for no more than two hours at a time, as long as they are the only person in the building. Yes, we are living in a time of so much uncertainty and despair, and yet... "I am certain that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, neither heights nor depths - nor anything else in all creation - will be able to separate us from the love of God that comes to us in Christ Jesus, Our Savior." (Romans 8:38) This was one of my mom's favorite Bible verses, and I hear her beautiful voice reciting it to me even now. I believe that the Holy Spirit is sending us hope and perseverance in a thousand unexpected ways, carrying us through this strange, strange year into a future filled with even more opportunities for actively sharing Christ's love in community.

May the peace of Christ be with you all,  
Julie E. Moe  
LMLC Council President

# SURVIVING MENTAL HEALTH IN A PANDEMIC

By: Jenifer Smith, MA, LMHC



The coronavirus brought on many changes: masks, social distancing, working from home, virtual learning, and the list goes on. These changes may have started to feel like the new norm. The feelings we are left with, however, never quite feel normal. Research has shown that anxiety and depression are on the rise—sometimes feeling steady and true and other times hitting us in waves when we least expect it. These feelings of worry, doubt, fear, hopelessness, and loneliness are all part of the collective trauma we are experiencing throughout the world. Those who experience domestic violence, struggle with substance use, or feel suicidal are even more vulnerable during this time.

Anxiety and depression do not look the same for everyone. Sometimes it can be quite noticeable if our thoughts are suddenly dark and negative or if we start to have a panic attack, however, these feelings can also be subtle and sneaky. You might notice a change in your everyday energy level or feel worried more often. Sometimes it can affect our appetite or decrease our enjoyment in things that normally bring us joy. It can also show up in physical aspects—increased headaches, stomach aches, and muscle tension. In children, we might see an increase in neediness or irritability and more meltdowns.

So, what do we do when the constant adjusting and adapting becomes too much and feels too heavy? First, realize that you are not alone, and your feelings are justified. It's okay to talk about how you feel, even if you're not sure why you're feeling that way. We have been in this trauma for months now, and it can get exhausting.

Our mental health may need more than just a nice chat to feel good and healthy. Here are a few tips to maintain your mental health during a pandemic:

- **Continue taking safety precautions.** Read new articles and research by reliable sources to understand where the risks truly lie. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) puts out information on safety restrictions and how to proceed in our daily life safely.
- **Limit time on social media and news.** Our brain needs time to absorb information.
- **Seek mental health counseling.** Counseling can be a huge support for children, teens, and adults alike. Counselors are ready to help you navigate through this uncertain time. Many offices now provide telehealth services to continue safety measures, and yes, it works!
- **Continue to socialize!** Yes, you can still do this: phone calls, video chats, or chatting from your porch to your neighbors. We can get creative here! It has also been approved to congregate in small groups, outside, while social distancing. For example: having a bakeoff with your friends where you each bake a treat and put it on their doorsteps to enjoy and then vote for a winner. Or do a pumpkin swap, where you carve a pumpkin, swap with some friends, and guess whose pumpkin was whose.
- **Continue maintaining your physical health.** Yes, our mind and body work together! Go for a walk, try yoga, or maintain your normal workout routine activities.
- **Find new hobbies!** Learning something new can help you find joy in unexpected places.

For more information on how to maintain your mental health during a pandemic visit:

CDC: [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)

CDC: mental health and coping and source for this article

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html>

Domestic Violence: [wscadv.org](https://www.wscadv.org)

National Suicide Hotline: <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org> / 1-800-273-8255

Substance Use: [Drugfree.org](https://www.drugfree.org)

## FROM THE BISHOP



Dear Beloveds of Christ,  
There are stories in this world that we will never know. Stories that beg to be told and yet they will never be heard because they have been forgotten, covered up, never told or intentionally destroyed.

A few weeks ago, I was floating down the Wenatchee River on an inner tube. It was a beautiful day – perfect weather – no sign of humanity anywhere. Rounding a bend, I suddenly saw a strange site: An old skinny white man wearing only a loin cloth flying a rainbow-colored kite. This man camping/living in an old RV on the banks of the Wenatchee, basically naked, long full beard and hair, arms

outstretched towards the heavens and flying a beautiful multi-colored kite. *What story does he have to share?*

A few Sundays ago, the *New York Times* ran a photo essay about hunger in America. The author writes, “In the pandemic economy, nearly one in eight households doesn’t have enough to eat. The lockdown, with its epic lines at food banks, has revealed what was hidden in plain sight: that the struggle to make food last long enough, and to get food that’s healthful – what experts call ‘food insecurity’ – is a persistent one for millions of Americans ... Like many hardships, this burden falls disproportionately on Black and Hispanic families, who are almost twice as likely to experience food insecurity as white families.” ([www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/09/02/magazine/food-insecurity-hunger-us.html](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/09/02/magazine/food-insecurity-hunger-us.html)) Through the photo gallery in this *New York Times* photo essay, we catch glimpses of the lives of Kandice, Brayden, Doris, Armani and many others. *What other stories are held in this story?*

As I write this article, large swaths of California, Oregon and Washington are on fire. Houses burned to the ground. People missing. People killed. Treasured items gone. Lives disrupted and forever changed. *What stories are lost in the raging fires?*

When you read this article, there is a very good chance that over 200,000 people in the United States will have died from COVID-19. Over 6 million will have been infected. Common sense measures to mitigate the spread of COVID have been politicized. Suicide, depression, hunger, loneliness, domestic violence, joblessness, and other hardships have increased in these last six months. *What story is no longer possible?*

Today I am more and more aware of the stories that have disappeared, been forgotten, or pushed underground. And I am ever mindful that as people who follow Jesus, we have the responsibility, the obligation – maybe it is a calling – to listen to the stories in the gaps of other stories. And to understand that the biggest voice might not be the place where the story is happening.

In Matthew 18, Jesus says, ‘Take care that you do not despise one of these little ones; for, I tell you, in heaven their angels continually see the face of my Father in heaven.’ A few verses later Jesus says, “It is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should be lost.”

You see, we are the people of the book – we are the people who claim the Holy Story. We are the people who believe that the story of God and humanity did not end with the cross but continues in, with and under all of us today. The Holy Spirit is alive and active among us. And the Holy Spirit is calling us through the stories we remember, the stories we share, the stories we hear, and the stories we notice.

Let us listen to one another's story. Let us be mindful of the stories that exist on the margins. Let those of us who have had big voices quiet ourselves to hear other stories. And let us be mindful that listening to stories is not the end. For those of us who are white, let us take to heart these words from Austin Channing Brown, "In too many churches and organizations, listening to the hurt and pain of people of color is the end of the road, rather than the beginning." (From *I'm Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness*)

I would love to hear your story. How are you doing? Where is God working in your life and in the life of the Church? Where do you see God? What stories need to be told? What pain needs to be shared? What stories do you want to hear?

May the One - whose story we live in - provide care, comfort, love, and justice for you and for this world.

Let us live, move, and be in God's Holy Story.

Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee

From the October 2020 edition of *The Spirit*

## EVENTS AT LMLC

### PAUSE FOR PRAYER

Join us for Pause for Prayer, on Zoom (link in mid-week update) or wherever you are  
Every Wednesday at 11:30 a.m.

### WORSHIP

Worship Videos are available every Sunday morning on Youtube, Facebook, our website, and your emails  
At least one worship a month is live via Zoom (with holy communion)  
Zoom link will be sent out via Email on the Saturday prior to worship

### BOOK GROUP

A new session will begin October 15th  
The group meets every Thursday at 7 p.m. until November 12th  
Stay tuned to the mid-week update for the book title

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**The Quarterly Messenger for Luther  
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